

Pros and Cons of Remote Meetings

Personally, I spend a lot of time thinking about stuff, and no matter which way I look at the terrible situation, I find many more Pros to the use of the internet for club meetings than I do Cons.

Given that club members are largely 'people of a certain' age, and perhaps not as technically savvy as younger woodturners might be, the thought of the kit required for a remote demonstration may well be fairly daunting. But from a club perspective, there is not that much more kit they need for a remote demonstration than if they were setting up for an 'in-person' one. (I have [some put some information together HERE that may be of use to clubs interested in remote demonstrations](#), for example).

Some committees may struggle with setting their club up for online meetings. Don't give up though. By arranging online meetings, it is still possible to engage with your membership and you will learn plenty of useful and interesting things in the process – every day's a school day, as they say.

Meetings will of course be different, but with a little bit of thought, a fun and successful meeting can be had by all. Perhaps a club could engage with a club from the other end of the country for a joint Show-and-Tell evening; share a remote demonstration like I described above. Think a bit outside the box, and your club members could benefit in ways it couldn't before 'the virus'.

Club members may also struggle with getting themselves set-up. If they have a laptop, setting up can be as simple as clicking on a link in an email to install the free software for the meeting and following on-screen instructions. There will be no need to sort out a camera or microphone, as the laptop will probably have one already. And joining a meeting is as simple as clicking a link in another email. If they have a PC, a separate webcam is preferable, but they can still join a meeting and use the chat facility in meeting programs if they don't have one, or want one.

Ultimately, if the committee arrange remote meetings, it will be the members who will need to proactively set themselves up in order to join in as house-visits are currently impossible if one to one help is required. I see this very much as both a Pro and a Con. It's good that the member can use the setting-up as a learning experience, but also not good if some of the techy side is just too much for them to figure out without some help. But! If a member can install some simple software and click a link in an email, then it really can be as easy as that.

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